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# What Victory In W. Va. Would Mean

By J. L. ENGBAHL.  
(Special Correspondence.)

Charleston, W. Va.—Victory by the coal miners and for the Socialist Party in West Virginia means an invasion of the "Solid South" by the American labor movement unsurpassed by anything that has happened up to the present time.

It is said of West Virginia that it is the most northern of the southern states, the most southern of the northern states, the most western of the eastern states and the most eastern of the western states. One look at the map verifies this view of West Virginia's geographical location, at the same time making very apparent its strategic position.

If it is impossible for labor to make progress in West Virginia then "The South" is hopeless until this condition will have changed. At the present time the economic and political movement of labor here is little of which to feel proud in "The South."

Once West Virginia has been won, however, the outlook immediately becomes much brighter. This is true for various reasons. There are about 500,000 negro voters in West Virginia. Most of them of course vote the Republican ticket while the bosses on the job use them as a foil against the native and foreign white worker.

Many of the West Virginia negroes work in the coal mines, and live as next-door neighbors to the white miners. The situation is often found where three miners' cabins adjoin to each other successively house the family of a native white miner, a colored miner and a foreign white miner. If race prejudice is to be beaten down in the economic and political struggle of the working class for its own emancipation, West Virginia is the place to make the first big beginning.

Then it can be done for the miners of West Virginia it can be done for the miners of Old Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and Alabama. There are no more miners among the 15,000 coal diggers of Old Virginia. There is an organization of growing strength in Kentucky, the semblance of a union in Tennessee, while an attempt is now being made to re-establish the power of the United Mine Workers that was annihilated in Alabama in 1909.

While West Virginia has its rapidly passing Bellamy third system, the miners in these southern states confront what is known as the "contract system." Through the contract system the working of the mines is let out to contractors who hire men to work in gangs under them. It so happens that the contractors are white men while the gangs are made up of colored miners, thus establishing a race distinction very favorable to the interests of the mine owners.

The Baldwin guards of West Virginia are a definite part of the organization of the West Virginia miners just as the contract system is a detriment to the organization of the southern mine workers. It is absolutely necessary that they should both be wiped out.

In many of the states of the nation the district organizations of the mine workers are the backbone of the state labor bodies. This will ultimately turn out to be the fact in West Virginia, Old Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and Alabama.

With the abolition of serfdom in West Virginia the first real fight can be made on the position that prevails in practically every southern state. The native workers of Mississippi and Louisiana will have a fighting chance against the "latter hostility of the lumber interests. The cruelly exploited workers of the Carolinas, Georgia and Florida will then get within hailing reach of something akin to industrial freedom.

It is hardly to be expected that the political movement of the workers can develop any considerable strength until the oppressed enjoy some semblance of economic freedom which is not the case today in "The South." The miners, more than any other wing of the economically organized workers, are rapidly moving toward this goal. With the situation in West Virginia settled in their favor the march of the mine workers' power southward to the Gulf of Mexico will reach with opportunities and promising of great success. Outside of this territory the coal miners are facing but two serious struggles at the pre-

sent time. Twenty thousand dollars are being sent weekly to Vancouver Island in British Columbia, to aid the miners there in winning recognition for their organization; while 5,000 are being sent weekly into the northern coal fields of Colorado in the fight that is being carried on there for the same purpose.

It is expected that great progress will be made in West Virginia within the next few weeks. The Kern Investigating Committee took evidence for several days at Washington, D. C. and on Tuesday, June 10, a sub-committee began its work in this city. The mine owners continue using the obstructionist methods at their disposal. In an effort to frighten the sub-committee from coming to Charleston the mine owners threatened that such a visit would immediately result in a renewal of civil war in the coal mining districts. Similar threats were made upon the arrival of the Socialist Party investigating committee.

With the work of organization well advanced in the Cabin and Paint Creek Coal Fields the miners are carrying out strenuous plans in the New River Field incident to opening up their work in the other coal fields of the state, principally in the Fairmont and Norfolk and Western Fields.

George H. Goebel, of New Jersey, national executive committeeman of the Socialist Party, will also start work immediately in the state in an effort to build up an invincible state Socialist Party organization. He will co-operate with the West Virginia Socialists and is empowered to call in as many additional speakers and organizers as he thinks advisable. It is then planned to send Eugene V. Debs through the state early in the fall in one of the biggest Socialist speaking tours that any state in the nation has ever seen.

Thus, before another political campaign rolls around, it is felt that West Virginia will not only be well on its way toward Americanization, but that steps will have been taken toward winning "The Solid South" for the working class.

## The Sherman Law Useful At Last.

When courts and lawyers wake up to the discovery that the constitutional guarantees of a free press and free speech are simply weapons for the suppression of a free press and free speech, and warrant for the confiscation of the physical property of a free press, why should anyone be surprised to be told that after a quarter of a century of winking the other eye at the Sherman law anti-trust law it is found in this year of grace that the Sherman law was intended to prevent workmen from protecting themselves by organization?

The legal mind, like the human body, is a wonderful and a fearful thing. When the United States government could sit supinely by and see a state of civil war ravage all the guarantees and privileges of the citizens of West Virginia for a full year, the natural result is a weakening of the reverence for the Federal government as a protector of citizenship which looks to that authority for safety.

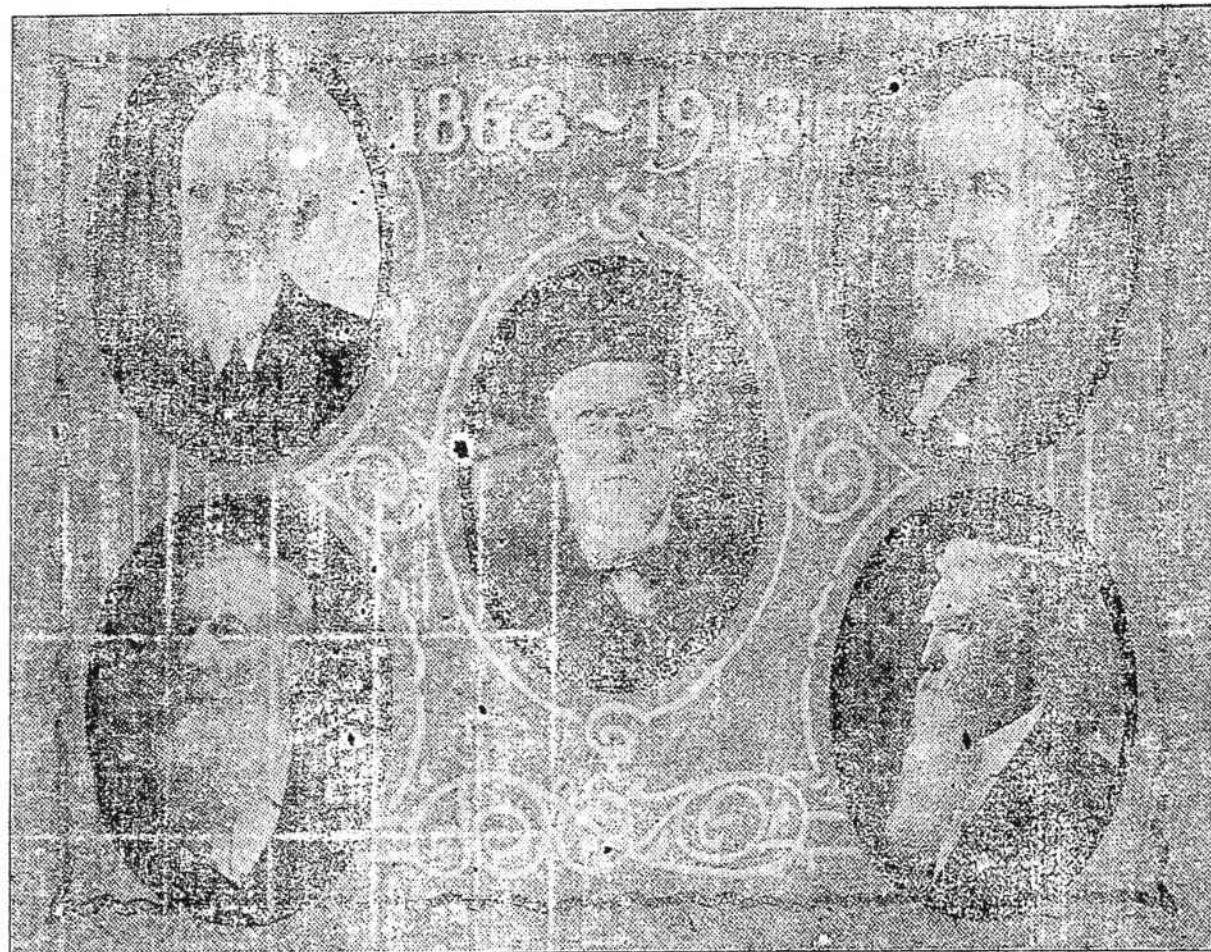
This was bad enough, but when that same government lends the help of its legal machinery to further ravish the constitutional privileges of the citizens of West Virginia by turning against them a specific law designed for a specific purpose as far from the situation in West Virginia as the south pole is from the north, what is the average citizen to think of his revered Federal government?

The Sherman law has become an important think except to harass labor organizations. Its original purpose was to protect the country against the depredations of great aggregations of capital. That was its only aim, its sole intention. It has failed in every attempt to protect the country from that menace. It has succeeded only when directed against the attempts of labor organizations to defend themselves against those very combinations of capital.

How long are the citizens going to rally behind a government which lends its legal machinery to stand aside its own laws? To establish lawlessness? To oppress those whom

# INTERESTING SKETCH OF FIVE LIVING SUR- VIVORS OF WHEELING CONVENTION OF 1861

This Remarkable Quintette, Whose Combined Ages Exceed 400 Years, Are Still Active Sons of West Virginia—Their Records Are Shining Examples of Patriotic and Serviceable Citizenship to Our Younger Generation—These Distinguished Citizens Have Been Invited to Be Guests of the Semi-Centennial Commission in Wheeling On June 20, State Day, of the Golden Jubilee Week



George B. Latham  
William Thomas Brown

W. L. Grant, M. D.

John L. Davis  
Alpheus Garrison

**ALPHEUS GARRISON.**  
Alpheus Garrison was born in Green county, Pennsylvania, February 20, 1833; moved to Guernsey county, Ohio, in 1839; in 1842 moved to Monongalia county, Virginia, now West Virginia, where he still resides. Mr. Garrison was married to Charlotte Henderson in 1853. In 1856 he was elected constable and served the term; in 1859 was appointed deputy sheriff and served until May, 1861, when he resigned and was appointed a delegate to the Wheeling convention. He was appointed recruiting agent for soldiers and deputy provost marshal until 1864. He joined the Union army as 2d lieutenant. Later was promoted to captain of company B, 17th W. Va. Infantry, and returned home in 1865. He was appointed assessor to fill a vacancy in 1865 and was elected assessor; in 1868 he was elected to the legislature and served the winter of 1869 in Wheeling, W. Va.; in 1870 was elected sheriff of the county and in 1880 was elected to the state senate from the Eleventh Senatorial district and served in Charleston, W. Va., 1891 and 1893. Since that time Mr. Garrison has lived on his farm. He has been a member of the Christian church for more than 52 years and is a prominent Mason. He is now in his 82d year, well preserved, active and keenly interested in the current events of the day.

**GEORGE ROBERT LATHAM.**  
George Robert Latham was born in Prince William county, Virginia, in sight of the Bull Run battle ground, March 9, 1832, and was reared on a farm. In November, 1849, his father moved his family into Western Virginia and settled in Taylor county. In January, 1850, Mr. Latham had a severe attack of pleurisy followed by general prostration, from which he was totally disabled for farm work for three years. In 1852, having partially regained his health, he taught school in Taylor and Barbour counties, Virginia, until the winter of 1859. From 1855 to 1861 he was a citizen of Grant county, where he was married on December 24, 1857, to Caroline A. Thayer, then of Monongalia county, Virginia. While teaching school he studied law and during the last week of the year 1859 was examined and admitted to the bar, opening his first law office in Grant county. About the time of the presidential nominations for 1860 he published a campaign paper called the "Western Virginian." About two weeks before the election, Mr. Latham hoisted a large United States flag over his law office and turned it into a recruiting office. By the 20th of May he had a full company enrolled, which afterwards became Com-

pany B, and was the first Union company recruited in the interior of the state. The latter part of June Capt. Latham was ordered with his company to Grafton, where he met Gen. McClellan and assisted him in preparing his West Virginia campaign. The company was then assigned to Gen. Morris' command at Philippi and took part in the campaign to Carrick's Ford. Capt. Latham and his company were left at Beallstown to protect the line of transportation. From this time on until his muster out in March, 1865, his history is incorporated with that of the regiment. Toward the close of his service, Secretary of War Stanton nominated Col. Latham as brevet brigadier general, after a thorough investigation of his record, thus placing upon this arduous officer one of the proudest honors of his life. In the fall of 1864 Col. Latham was elected a member of the Thirty-ninth Congress for the Second district of West Virginia, and served on the committees of printing and of public buildings and grounds. On account of failing health he declined to be a candidate for re-nomination and was appointed as United States Consul at Melbourne, Australia, by President Johnson, serving three years, returning in 1870, since which time Col. Latham has retired mostly from public life. About 1875 he was elected and served a term of two years as superintendent of public schools of Lincoln county, West Virginia, and in 1880 was appointed by President Hayes as Supervisor of Census for the First Census district of West Virginia. He is now in his 82d year, though still taking a lively interest in the current events of the day.

**JOHN J. DAVIS.**  
John J. Davis was born at Clarksburg on the 5th day of May, 1835, and has lived there all his life. Studied law under Hon. Geo. H. Lee and then attended the law school of Hon. John W. Brockenbrough at Lexington, Virginia, for two years. Was examined for license by Judge Lucas P. Thompson, of Staunton, and Hon. Geo. H. Lee and Hon. G. D. Camden, both of Clarksburg; has been practicing at the bar for 37 years. Mr. Davis was elected a member of the Virginia legislature in 1861, which was to have met in Richmond the following December, but the war broke out and when the government of Virginia was reorganized he went to Wheeling as a member of the first legislature under that government; was again elected in 1870 a member of the West Virginia legislature; was also a delegate to the first convention which met in Wheeling in May, 1861, that led up to the subsequent formation of the new state of West Virginia. Mr. Davis served in Congress during its 42d and 43d sessions. He was the first Democrat to be elected from the First Congressional

district of West Virginia after the war, Hon. Nathan Goff being his opponent in his first campaign, and the late Benjamin Wilson his opponent in his second campaign. Received the appointment of visitor to West Point by the late President Cleveland; was a member of the Board of Directors of Hospital for Insane at Weston by appointment of the late Gov. J. B. Jackson and served until the latter was succeeded by a Republican Governor.

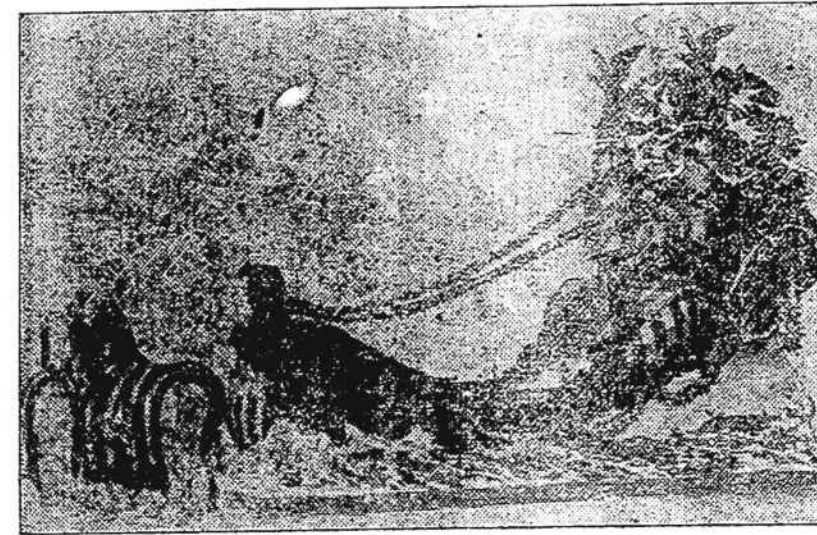
**W. L. GRANT, M. D.**  
Dr. W. L. Grant was born on July 23, 1822, in Harrison county, then the State of Virginia. After securing his education in the local schools, he attended the Jefferson Medical College, from which he graduated in the year 1857. After graduating in medicine, he located at Jane Lew, in Lewis county, for the practice of his profession. While located there, he was chosen a delegate to the convention looking towards the separation of this State from Virginia. In 1862 he was commissioned a surgeon of the 9th West Virginia Regiment. In the year 1871 he moved to Grafton to practice his profession, where he resided continuously since. Owing to his advanced age, it will be impossible for him to attend a reunion of the surviving members of the convention which gave birth to our State, but he shall greet them with joy and good will in spirit.

**WILLIAM THOMAS BROWN.**  
William Thomas Brown, son of Elizabeth and Thomas Brown, was born near Gladestown, Preston county, West Virginia. He removed at an early age to Kingwood, county seat of same county, where he learned the carpenter's trade. He ardently espoused the cause of the Union, though in a section hostile to such sentiment. He was chosen as one of the delegates to the memorable convention at Wheeling, W. Va., which had much to do with the formation of the State of West Virginia. Mr. Brown, just prior to this time, was much in the limelight, owing to the fact that he had in his custody the guns sent to Kingwood by Governor Wise during the famous Joan Brown raid. He discharged his duty in this regard with credit to himself and all concerned.

While completing arrangements to join the Union forces during this same year he was stricken down with illness from exposure, which covered a period of more than a year. In 1862 he entered the employ of the Baltimore and Ohio Railway Company as bridge builder and repairer, which position he held for thirty-nine years, retiring on a pension.

While operating the work of bridge construction at Bridgeport, Harrison county, W. Va., April 30, he was captured by Confederate forces and taken to Richmond, Va., where he was confined for six months in Castle Thunder. Later, he was transferred to Salisbury Prison, N. C., arriving there on or about October 27 of the same year. On October 29, 1863, he was released on parole as a disloyal citizen of Virginia and experienced difficulty in securing regulation transportation to Richmond, Va. He arrived at Richmond, Va., on November 6, only to again be refused transportation by the Confederate General in charge as well as from the Secretary of War. He was compelled to cover the distance from Richmond, Va., to his home at Independence, W. Va., on foot.

To-day, Mr. Brown having sustained the hardships and privations of war and prison, encountered many of the adventures of military life, with the weight of seventy-eight years resting on his shoulders, is rugged and vigorous, and his happy state of health gives promise that he will live many more years in the peace and contentment of a life well lived and replete with usefulness to his country and his fellow-men.



"Ship of State," one of the attractive floats in Wheeling Pageant to be held June 17th.

those same laws were designed to protect, and if possible, save? Compared to the question of freedom doesn't the tariff and everything else look rather small?—Pittsburg Leader.

## Capitalistic Democracy On Trial.

Since the inauguration of Woodrow

Wilson this country has become the stage for a scene of industrial warfare unheard of in American history. From Maine to California, from the paper to the Gulf, we see a nation divided into two hostile classes, each at daggers drawn with the other. The economic problem of getting a living is growing terrifying. Four dollars a day will not keep a family in decency

while the average wage is below \$2.00 per day. And while the struggle between Capitalists and Labor daily grows more menacing and the workers are rising everywhere in revolt, the Presidential Sphinx at Washington mumbles about Jeffersonian democracy. 'Tis said that Nero fiddled while Rome burned.

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